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A SERMON

ON THE

PRESENT CRISIS,

PREACHED AT THE

CATHEDRAL OF WINCHESTER,

DECEMBER 9, 1792:

WITH AN

APPENDIX,

BY THE REV. EDMUND POULTER.

R

Surge ne longus tibi ſomnus unde
Non times adſit.

HOR.

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M DCC XCIII.

BRITISH MUSEUM

EPISTLE TO HEBREWS, CHAP. xiii. v. i.

"LET BROTHERLY LOVE *CONTINUE*."

WHEN St. Paul renewed this exhortation to the Hebrews, as he knew the value, ſo he knew the paſt prevalence, and then preſent exiſtence, of their brotherly love; to the future laſting *continuance* of it therefore he confined his admonition.—That continuance he found queſtionable, not from the diſcovery of any internal diſaffection prevailing amongſt them, but of external attempts forming againſt them. He ſaw with concern, and with caution provided againſt, the firſt advancement of erroneous, as novel, opinions, which though of a few private perſons only, yet as they reached, were liable to contaminate, the public ear: as a wiſe and prudent preventive againſt ſuch fatal errors, he added this ſalutary advice—"Be not carried about with divers and ſtrange doctrines." The pernicious tendency of thoſe doctrines is by ſubſequent paſſages clearly demonſtrable to be by no means confined merely to theoretical and controverſial ſpeculations, but to extend alſo to the moſt

important and confeſſed objects of practical conduct, from which they were attempted to be diverted.

To diſarm the efforts which he obſerved made by their enemies againſt their juſt and rational contentment, he ſaid, "Be ye content with ſuch things as ye have." To oppoſe the ſpirit of diſobedience which was ſtudiouſly and inſidiouſly diſſeminated amongſt them, he thus called their duty to their recollection, "Obſerve them which have the rule over you, and ſubmit yourſelves." To reanimate them in their religion, which was artfully endeavoured to be undermined, he thus reminded them of it, "Remember them who have ſpoken unto you the Word of God, whoſe Faith follow, conſidering the end of their converſation."—In other words, conſidering that as the origin and cauſe of their converſation is the Truth of that Word, ſo the end and effect of it is your own double benefit, of temporal happineſs and eternal ſalvation. Having inſtigated them thus forcibly to the great end of duty, he concluded his animadverſions by ſhortly directing them to the means in the following emphatical words: "To do good and to *communicate* forget not;" that is, in ſubſtance, it is not always ſufficient to think right, nor even to do well, theſe alone may be merely perſonal and ſolitary duties; a more comprehenſive ſocial ſervice is ſometimes requiſite, and that extending not only to communion at the altar, not ſolely to joining in common prayer, but to every ſpecies of good,

communication

communication and *aſſociation*, by which the individual mind is improved, the perſonal feeling confirmed, the particular faith corroborated, and thence the general welfare effected.

To deſcend from Doctrine to the application of it, from the admiration of the Apoſtle's precepts to the benefit of his example, let us apply the principles inculcated by him in former times to theſe, which at leaſt require not only as much as thoſe in which he wrote, but as much as *any* time ever demanded the enforcement of *any* principle.—If it be then neceſſary to be on our guard, when we are moſt aſſailed, then to provide againſt contamination when it is not only moſt prevalent in extent, but moſt approaching in ſituation—If danger be compounded of the magnitude of an evil, and its approximation, and a great calamity at a diſtance be as formidable as a ſmall grievance near; if doubly terrible be that ſtate wherein both thoſe ſhocking incidents are united, producing the extreme caſe of the *greateſt* dangers being alſo the *neareſt*—*neareſt* I truſt, not in *probability* ſo much as in *proximity*: —It is not to be diſſembled that ſuch is the preſent criſis—when divers and moſt ſtrange doctrines are abroad, affecting, nay more, ſubverting the religious, the moral, the political, the natural ſtate of man. Of which prodigies as the *exiſtence* never could have been conceived but from the *experience*, ſo the farther progreſs never could be imagined but from the exiſtence: furniſhing together the rare caſe of the actual concurrence of things out-

ſtretching the flighty conception of ideas. Subſtantial facts have now taken the lead of airy ſpeculations; and the uſually ſlow progreſs of real acts has outſtripped the uſually rapid flights of mental creations—the moſt fertile imagination muſt have been barren, the moſt inventive fancy dull, the moſt creative genius unproductive, in any vain effort of the mind to anticipate, or even to keep pace with, the moſt extravagant, eccentric, incomprehenſible acts which one part of the world has miraculouſly exemplified, and the reſt of it has ſtupendouſly witneſſed!

The nature of the queſtions which have heretofore agitated mankind, even in the moſt turbulent ſeaſons, is altered; and it ſeems as if the unheard-of prodigies of the preſent times had been deviſed and executed to deſtroy what can no longer be conſidered the wonders of the paſt.

As the falſe ambition of former times has conceived the idea, though never exhibited the fact, of univerſal empire, it was reſerved for the phrenetic fury of theſe, to deviſe, with as little ſucceſs we truſt, the portentous project of univerſal anarchy, of catholic confuſion; to looſen the ties of men, to diſſolve their affections, to deaden their feelings, to interdict compaſſion, to prohibit compunction, to counterchange virtues and vices, merits and crimes; to reſtore all the folly, but reverſe the object of papiſtical ſupremacy; to grant abſolution from good, to iſſue

exhortations

exhortations to apoſtacy, to utter cenſures againſt conſcience, reſcripts againſt repentance, denunciations againſt fidelity, bulls againſt morality, anathemas againſt religion, excommunications againſt believers *. Not ſatisfied with being thus the infallible vicegerents of God, it is the boaſt of theſe philoſophers to be his rivals, his opponents, his conquerors; to wreſt his thunders from him, and uſe them againſt him, uſurping his attributes in order to deſtroy his operations, to aſpire at omnipotence of evil, to work miracles of wickedneſs, not only without, but againſt his power: it is the impious pride of theſe modern political giants, with real attempts not ſhort of the fictitious efforts of their fabulous archetypes, to confound Heaven and Earth in order to overthrow both —and, like thoſe, muſt end in overwhelming themſelves.

After the world has by ſlow degrees been brought forward from a ſtate of nature to that of ſociety, this is as vain as it would be pernicious an attempt, at once to bring them back again; for it were as eaſy and as eligible to reduce the material world to its original chaos, as the moral to its firſt intellectual darkneſs. It is not now the object to civiliſe barbarians, but to barbariſe citizens; to diſſolve the ſocial compact; to deſtroy the laws of nations; by

* All theſe, and any other aſſertions in alluſion to France, are not looſely or figuratively made, but I pledge myſelf to produce facts to ſubſtantiate any of them that may be called in queſtion.

falſely aſſerting the *(a)* equality of all, to invert the order of nature, which has made no two equal, either in mind or in body, or in ſituation ſo much dependent on the various qualities of theſe two ingredients in the compound of animal man.

As to the world at large, it is no longer a queſtion between one form of government and another, but between any government and none, between peace and diſorder, ſafety and danger, protection and proſcription. As to any particular country, it is no longer a queſtion of partial defects, but of total failure in its Conſtitution.—In our own country eſpecially, it is no longer a queſtion ſuch as we have formerly ſeen, taking them in their largeſt extent, of more or leſs civil or religious liberty, proportionally conſiſtent with ſecurity of perſon and property, of toleration or perſecution, of prerogative or privilege—in ſhort, of any modification merely in the balance of the given monarchical, ariſtocratical, or democratical parts of our legiſlature; it is not now, as it has been, in caſes of reform, or even of revolution, a diſpute about degrees, modes, or diviſions, but the fundamental matter of the Conſtitution we poſſeſs—nay of any Conſtitution at all—not about the preciſe portion of each ingredient in our mixed Government, but about the admiſſion of any part of each, nay more, of any remain of either.—We are at iſſue on the whole; all, all is at ſtake—every liberty, every property ſecured to us by our Great Charter, ratified by our Bill of Rights, confirmed by

our

our Glorious Revolution—ourſelves, our families, our houſes, which as we have been wont to call let us defend as our caſtles, our altars, our well-being, our being—Theſe we are to fight for —no, we cannot have to fight for them, no enemies will dare to fight againſt them.

Still leſs is it a party queſtion *(b)*, for from the very evil of theſe times ariſes this good at leaſt, that the petty intereſts or ambition of individuals are loſt in the common concern of the country, and party gives way to patriotiſm: it is hoped there exiſts not ſuch a partiſan as to conſider any one man or ſet of men, comparatively with a whole people, with the whole world.

Let then Brotherly Love and Chriſtian Charity continue in thoſe in whom it ſtill ſurvives, let it revive in thoſe with whom it has been interrupted, let us make a mutual ſacrifice of all perſonal partialities and prejudices to common intereſts, on the ſacred altar of univerſal welfare; it is the cauſe of God and Nature, therefore well worthy all the exertions of men. If charity determine us for others, if ſelf-intereſt for ourſelves, to dread and avert the calamities, of parents being childleſs, children orphans, of huſbands and wives being widowed, of friends being enemies—if the honour of women, the lives of men, the ſuccour of children—if every affection, every tie in

nature we deem the ſtrongeſt, be our concern—all, all theſe are deeply involved in the queſtion agitated, nay adverſely decided in ſome countries, and, what imports us more, attempted to be obtruded on others, and even on this; the queſtion of virtue or vice, of righteouſneſs or wickedneſs, of humanity or brutality, of ſociety or barbariſm—ſuppoſing there to be two ſides in theſe queſtions, which I truſt need only be put to be favourably anſwered here, the adherents to both muſt ſuffer; all would be loſers, none could be gainers. It would be a fatal conflict, with little difference between victory and defeat. Let us be careful then what we *do*, when what begins with *doing*, muſt end in *ſuffering*. If we ſhould feel much for every order of men under the univerſal calamity of commotion, the lower the order the more ſhould we feel, and for the loweſt the moſt.

A comparatively few ſplendid inſtances, of princes fallen, of nobles ſacrificed, or of gentry deſtroyed, may attract the greater notice from the greater notoriety of them; and philanthropy, feeling for all equally who equally ſuffer, would have in thoſe caſes much to lament: the greater grief would be for the more extenſive perdition of the middle race of men, but the moſt accumulated miſery muſt be felt at the general devaſtation of the common people. Particular proſcriptions, ſingle aſſaſſinations, individual murders, muſt excite much horror; but it is promiſcuous ſlaughter, general maſſacre, common depopu-

 lation,

lation, that conſtitutes common calamity.—Theſe are ſtrong words—but they are weak to the ideas they repreſent, and theſe ideas humble to the facts they are to follow. Language is calculated only for mean caſes, not for extremes. Words may ſketch the coarſe outlines of ſuch complicated calamities; but they cannot fill up the full figure of their miſery, which, to increaſe a wonder in order to raiſe it to a reſemblance, would not only, like a larger civil Coloſſus co-extending with the world, in its ſtretch beſtride it, but like that cruſh it in its fall. The people, the people are ever the chief ſufferers: there is this diſtributive juſtice, and retaliative vengeance, that as the people alone can cauſe ſuch a calamity, ſo the people, if not alone, muſt chiefly be ſufferers by it. Whatever is fought *for*, the people muſt be fought *with*; nay more, they muſt fight with one another, and one half muſt be ſet to deſtroy the other:—whatever the work, they are the inſtruments, they are the ſcape-goats, the bloody ſacrifice offered up by the votaries of deſolation to its idols. If a town be laid waſte by fire, or ſword, or famine, are there more palaces or cottages, are there more ſplendid manſions or ſmall houſes, are there more rich or poor inhabitants of them deſtroyed, or worſe than deſtroyed? In ſuch an equal calamity in ſufferance, how unequal the numbers of the ſufferers! Equal calamity I ſay, for it is a fatal fallacy to ſuppoſe that there is difference in the nature of feeling for a loſs, between two deſcriptions of perſons however different, if each loſe all. Thus far in point of

property:—as to that which ſuperſedes property, of affections, leſs equivocal is the reſemblance. Are a cottager's family leſs the objects of his heart; is their deſtruction, or worſe than deſtruction, every violation he and they are ſubject to, leſs an injury to him or them than to the rich? So much for the extreme caſe of total devaſtation.—In any leſs degree, of fields being ravaged, houſes being plundered, perſons being outraged, there is indeed great inequality between their ſufferings; but it is ſtill againſt the poor, not only as to the number collectively, which I have before ſhewn, but as to the poſitive ſufferance of each individual:—the perſons of the poor are more defenceleſs; their property, though leſs, yet, which is the ſame thing, all their property, is more expoſed. Each order would be ſunk a degree lower; the rich might become poor, the poor muſt become deſtitute. What depreſſes one from much to little, precipitates the other from little to nothing; what is partial ſcarcity to one, is utter deprivation to the other; what drives the rich to poverty, drives the poor to famine.—Theſe being their common and their ſeveral evils, which can the beſt eſcape them?—The rich, even after his loſs, may have ſomething left to fly with, ſome friends to fly to—Alas! the poor, even before his loſs, has nothing for the purpoſe of flight, and, if he had, nobody to receive him!

Theſe and more, many more, would be the actual evils of commotion in any event. What then would be the expected

good

good to recompenſe them? Suppoſe neceſſaries to be ſcarce, bad or dear, would inteſtine war make them more plentiful, better, or cheaper? would it furniſh you with more clothing, more fuel, or enable you to do better without them? in ſhort, would it *ſupply* more wants, or *occaſion* more? Anſwer yourſelves theſe queſtions, and, ſhuddering at the *idea* even, if the *actual propoſal* of diſturbance be ever made to you, reject it with horror; treat thoſe as your enemies who would ſeduce you to your ruin, thoſe as your friends who warn you from it.—"Be not then carried away with divers and ſtrange doctrines;" beſides other reaſons, for that alſo which the Apoſtle gives, "becauſe they have not profited them that have been occupied therein." Witneſs France herſelf, at once the ſource from which comes, and the channel through which flows, this wide waſting deluge of ſtrife, this political Mara of bitter waters, which, having inundated all the neighbouring countries, having reſiſted all human efforts to ſtem its torrent, waits only for the power of Providence to ſay to it—"Thus far ſhalt thou go, and no farther." Mark the progreſs of theſe doctrines there, and abjure the terror of their progreſs hither.—"By their fruits ye ſhall know them:" they are continued miſery, protracted perſecution, enlarged proſcription, extended confiſcation, preſent commotion, exiſting tyranny, approaching famine. The principal characters in this tragedy have prematurely died long before its cataſtrophe. The firſt movers of it have long ſince repented too late to ſave either

themſelves or their country; their followers in conduct are cloſely following them in its natural conſequences. Intermediate, flattering, treacherous victories and ſucceſſes, as they are falſely called, only ſerve to make their exiſting and approaching calamities of all kinds the more horrible—only ſhewing what a terrible example Providence holds out to the world, that ſin and guilt, however prevailing for a time, and apparently triumphant, only riſe the higher to fall the lower.

Let not however the cauſe of England be confounded with that of France. We are a revolution beforehand with her; and ſhe might require ſuch a revolution as ours, not her own, to be even with us: ſhe has not obtained our glorious mean of mixed government, but has gone from her extreme of power to that of anarchy; we have fairly tried her extreme of a republic, and it has failed. As we have no occaſion for it, ſo have we more defence againſt it. We have to interpoſe between us and confuſion, the only *(c)* equality valuable to a nation, our equal laws, which ſhe wanted; our liberal morality, inſtead of her refined profligacy; our rational religion, inſtead of her fenſeleſs ſuperſtition; in a word, the uſe of what ſhe had the abuſe. The difference lies in the degree, not in the thing: for it is not that diſtinctions themſelves are odious, but her inſulting diſtinctions; not reſtrictions themſelves, but her oppreſſive reſtrictions; not our power, but her tyranny; not our ſubjection, but her ſlavery;

not

not our due ſubordination, but her degrading humiliation; no our expedient privileges, but her unjuſt exemptions; not the priſons which in our hands are for neceſſary confinement, but the baſtiles which in her hands were dungeons of oppreſſion.—It is not, I ſay, our moderation, but her exceſs in all theſe that is offenſive to a people—and juſtly offenſive, for the greateſt curſe is a perverted bleſſing. There is the difference between our caſes, and thence will be the difference of our fates:—in ſhort, as we have not the ſame cauſe for any revolution, much leſs for ſuch an one as France; ſo even if we had, we would not accept it with the ſame conſequences, incluſive of every evil, excluſive of every good; conſequences which I ſhall not attempt to particulariſe, becauſe it would be unneceſſary to thoſe who know them, and incredible to thoſe who do not.

By all motives then, both divine and human, by all perſonal conſiderations, by all the inducements of ſelf-intereſt and ſelf-defence, by all ſelfiſh objects, ſocial duties and domeſtic affections, the people are called upon to reſiſt the complicated calamity of commotion, of which as they would be peculiarly the cauſe, or rather the inſtruments, ſo they would peculiarly feel the effects.

In ſuch a criſis as this, it is only neceſſary for the people to think at all, in order to think right. Under any attempt to injure them in all ways, by poiſoning their minds, deſtroying their morals,

morals, corrupting their principles, effacing their religion: we have only to deſire them to think for themſelves, uſe their reaſon, employ their feelings, conſult their religion; theſe muſt all in uniſon proclaim the part they are to take. If, inſtead of theſe, they will follow French ſpies, and Engliſh traitors, their own deeds be on their own heads!

If then any ſeditious traitors cry, in the hypocritical cant of former times, "To your tents, O Iſrael!" let it be a watch-word to you on the contrary to fly to your houſes:—for while you would go forth to act where your preſence is not juſtified, for the oppreſſion of your neighbours, you would neglect to ſtay at home where it is demanded for the protection of your families; you would add every crime of commiſſion to every crime of omiſſion.

Let not the cauſe of the preſent alarm be miſtaken:—if we are alarmed, it is not from any doubt of the determination on theſe queſtions, but at the exiſtence of them. Yet let us obſerve, that before the commencement of them we ſhould have as little ſuppoſed it, as after it we can doubt the concluſion. As therefore the one has taken place contrary to our expectation, ſo may the other contrary to our conception. The timely alarm will probably prevent the danger, or ſurely repel it. Our oppoſition to the bare idea only which is now inculcated, may hinder the internal or the foreign attempt being made, but muſt inſure the

failure of it. The time is certainly come for all friends to our Conſtitution to declare their principles. Such a declaration merely would confound all the machinations of our domeſtic enemies or foreign foes. It is neceſſary to meet the ſecret combination of enemies, by the open concert of friends. There can be no doubt of the greater propriety as well as expediency of our aſſociating for legal, than their confederating for illegal purpoſes. What is wanting in number and conſequence, is attempted to be made up by combination; and it is too well known, a ſmall force acting in concert, may take by ſurpriſe a large body disjointed. When a train is laid, the hand of one ſingle incendiary may ſet it on fire, and a little fire may ſoon ſpread a great way *(d)*.

A queſtion is now brought forward by thoſe enemies, which it ill becomes the ſafety, the ſpirit, or the number of thoſe friends to decline. As their ſilence hitherto may have cauſed its riſe, ſo their farther ſupineneſs might encourage its continuance, as certainly their ſeaſonable interference muſt produce its fortunate termination.

Mercy towards the infatuated few who might be the objects firſt of popular vengeance, laſt of legal puniſhment, as well as ſelf-defence, demands our early interference. In doing this, let us remember and imitate the conduct of that great officer who, when the Epheſians would have perſecuted St. Paul, ſaid, " The law is open."

open."—Let us deprecate that perſecution * which the unpopularity of ſome daring individuals in aiding the ſpirit of ſedition has made them but narrowly eſcape; let them learn caution from their eſcape, and let them no more incur the ſame danger. When an indignant people riſe againſt the enemies of their common public peace, it may not be in the power of the moſt ſtrennous *lovers* of law and order to protect the *diſturbers* of them; but it is in their power, therefore their duty, as I now do, to warn them.

Such a general aſſociation may well, and, I truſt, will be joined by all religious † Diſſenters, all political Reformers; by all who are not univerſal enemies to any Conſtitution, to any Religion. —We do not proteſt againſt reform, we do not preſume to *enforce* it; we wiſh ſuch reform as our Legiſlature ſhall think proper. With reſpect to Teſts, we have no doubt but as they were firſt impoſed from neceſſity, ſo they are continued with reluctance, and will be removed whenever it can be done with ſafety. We wait with patient confidence, that what in theſe reſpects and others ſhall be found wiſe to do, will be con-

* This caution is become the more neceſſary, from the late appearances of perſecution at Mancheſter and other places.

† Many of both theſe deſcriptions, particularly the Diſſenters of Birmingham, have ſince joined in this common cauſe.

ſtitutionally

ſtitutionally done; but we do not attempt, by an abſolute violation of the Conſtitution, to remedy a ſuppoſed defect in it.

Let us not confound partial reformers with total revolutioniſts. Let them not confound themſelves. If one friend and many robbers are at our door, and we cannot let in him who comes to ſerve us without thoſe who come to plunder us, we muſt keep out both—let him peaceably depart, and return another time and we may admit him—but let not his indignation be raiſed at our reluctant excluſion of him, for fear of our ruinous admiſſion of them—ſtill leſs let him join them in forcing their entry together, for we muſt then treat them both alike; and, even if they ſucceed together, let him be aſſured, as they would join him to deſtroy us—they would next deſtroy him, and he would be leſs likely to obtain his object from them than from us.

At the ſame time, let us manfully, that is with the feeling as well as the ſpirit of men, meet the caſe of the times, hard perhaps, not from political grievances, but from natural wants; which, as all are ſubject to feel, all are bound to relieve. Let us fairly aſk, and honeſtly anſwer the queſtion—Does great diſtreſs exiſt amongſt the labouring poor?

To thoſe who ſay relief is not ſolicited, we anſwer, it ſhould

the ſooner and the ſafer be granted; not from force—not even from fear; but from feeling. Great diſtreſs, like great grief, is ſilent—Sturdy beggary is importunate—Humble miſery is not obtruſive, it is not obvious, it muſt be ſought—it ſeeks not. Would you wait till what is ſilently pined for by penury becomes clamorouſly demanded by deſpair; remember, that as the gentle ſpirit of poverty is patient as long as it can endure, driven to extremity it is imperious.—What mercy could thoſe expect then, who render none now? The generally increaſed price of the neceſſaries of life being greater than the advance of labourers wages, there does appear to exiſt ſuch diſtreſs. The evil which reaſon and obſervation thus eſtabliſh let humanity remedy. Even under any practicable advance of the labourer's intereſt, ſtill charity, prudence, policy, nay economy, all would proclaim that " The labourer is worthy of his hire." *(e)*

As we renounce acting in the meaſure of reform becauſe it is not conſtitutionally in our power to carry it into execution, let us adopt the meaſure of relief becauſe it is—Protection is the claim of all who want it, from all who have it to beſtow; and as the right of charity has never been denied, let the exerciſe of it never be with-holden.—In this great object alſo, common to all, let us truſt, that after individual temporary aſſiſtance has done all it can to the general relief, ſuch an indiſpenſable bleſſing will not be left to ſo precarious a fund; but that the Legiſlature

will, by lowering the *(f)* taxes that burthen the poor, thus generouſly co-operate with a people who ſo readily co-operate with it.

Let not individuals be diſputing about preciſe times, or minute points of diſcretion, when a great cauſe and great authority call on us to act collectively on the broad baſis of univerſal duty againſt our domeſtic, if not foreign enemies, our internal and external emiſſaries. We are no longer left to the uncertainty of private opinion as to the exiſtence of the cauſe of our apprehenſion, nor as to the mode of our preventing its effects. Our Gracious Sovereign, aided by the wiſdom of his Council, has adviſedly taken the alarm himſelf, and prudently given it to us; let us thankfully receive it. Let then the friends of the Conſtitution ſtand forth, ſpeaking figuratively, as one man, and they will ſcarcely find left, literally ſpeaking, one enemy. Thus will the *brotherly love*, recommended by St. Paul, *continue*, by our forgetting not, according to his advice, " to do good, and to *communicate*."

APPENDIX.

(a) IT is material that the people of England ſhould know this fraud on the people of France. While equality is aſſerted generally, it is, in fact, even there, no more than another leſs odious name for republicaniſm: the ſuperiority of King and Lords being removed; but the neceſſary inequality of perſon, ſtation, and property, continuing. The people, being deceived by the term, have called for an Agrarian Law, or equal participation of property; but that being impracticable, is denied.—They have been taught this fatal leſſon by their miſleaders; and, like Shylock, "It will go hard but they will better the inſtruction."

(b) I meant this alluſion to the parties themſelves, as well as the people: to the latter it ſtill applies; but although the meeting of Parliament exhibited to the anxious public a ſatisfactory proof of unanimity in the primary cauſe of the Conſtitution, yet ſorry was I to obſerve, from my own attendance and attention to the debate, complete diſunion on meaſures ſecondary only to the Conſtitution itſelf in importance. On the great queſtions of war or peace, ſuſpenſion of the habeas corpus, reform of parliament, removal of teſts in this country, and on all the great fundamental queſtions in Scotland and Ireland; inſtead of the reconciliation, the union, which the time, which the country, which all but the parties themſelves ſeemed to call for, I lamented to find declared diviſion and renewed hoſtilities both preſent and proſpective.—Great is the reſponſibility on thoſe who have cauſed this continuance of diviſion.—If juſt offers of junction of men on reaſonable terms of conformity in meaſures have not been made, or being made on the one hand, have not been met on the other, the country will know whom to conſider as their friends, whom their enemies; and they have a right on both ſides to expect an explanation on this moſt important ſubject to them; for as Mr. Burke ſaid, who, ſtanding midway between the two parties, can impartially judge of both, whatever may be the ambition or the intereſt of any indi-

viduals,

viduals, nothing can be clearer than that the intereſt of the country in this criſis, which *requires* reconciliation and union, ſhould *obtain*, and may almoſt *enforce* them.

" *Quicquid neceſſitas defendit*, cogit."

(c) It is obſervable that this our limited equality, that is, *equal laws*, was ever the aim of free countries, and is, for example, exactly ſynonimous with that object for which the patriots of Athens, Harmodius and Ariſtogiton, deſtroyed its tyrant Hipparchus;

" Ισονομους τ' Αθηνας εποιησατην—"

KALL.

while the French equality, that is, *equal crimes*, can only be compared with the "*peccata paria*" of the ſanguinary Draco, or to that equal liberty deſcribed by Swift to have been obtained for his *fellows*, by the aſſaſſin whoſe

" Sharp knife hath ſet you at eaſe,
And every man round me may *rob* if he pleaſe."

The Pikes of Paris, how unlike that glorious

" εν μυρτου κλαδι το ξιφος."

KALL.

How like rather that aſſaſſin's knife, or that murderous inſtrument of the Regicides of " the meek Duncan!" for ſuch is their object, and " ſuch a weapon they were to uſe." SHAK.

(d) We all remember what an extenſive calamity a ſmall banditti effected in the riots of London in the year 1780, when the public were ſurpriſed by a few individuals; they recovered indeed from their panic, and we were more aſtoniſhed at the ſudden diſperſion, than at the ſudden riſe of the commotion—both which proved that it was confined to a few. I think I do not over-rate the number of our enemies now, nor their talents for miſchief, by ſuppoſing them to be at leaſt as many and as bad as they were then. Knowing what was done then, let us be

cautious,

cautious, precautious now, at the riſk even of being premature—let us benefit by the experience of thoſe times to avoid the danger of theſe, and let us not truſt to a ſimilar recovery, but prevent a ſimilar diſorder.

(e) It is clear that wages and rates are almoſt inverſely as each other, and the more pay labourers receive, the *fewer* of them want charity at all, and they the *leſs*. —There are two ways in which the voluntary relief of the labouring poor is to be effected, by raiſing their wages, or lowering the price of corn to them. Each of theſe has been done in many inſtances lately, and will be done in more, I hope in all, either by individuals, or by pariſhes collectively, of which the former appears more practicable, becauſe any individual may legally object to the difference of price of corn ſo lowered being made up out of the poors-rate, which has been done in ſome pariſhes, and becauſe, when ſo done, it falls more on the yeomanry than the gentry; but the latter is more deſirable, as it gives more proportional relief according to the price of proviſions, and to the conſumption, that is of courſe to the number of the family. For example, wheat is now about 7s. 6d. a buſhel; if the poor have it at 5s. which is the ſpecific thing done in this mode, a labourer with a large family conſumes a buſhel, therefore gains 2s. 6d.; a ſingle labourer conſumes about a third of that quantity, therefore gains leſs than 1s.; which ſeems ſtrict diſtributive charity.—I muſt here mention a fact which confounds all numerical calculation, that a ſingle labourer conſumes half as much as a family of four perſons, that is, the father of the family half-ſtarves himſelf to half-feed them:

After this conſideration of private charity, let me add, It is hoped Parliament, which alone can do it effectually, will grant public relief. To their greater credit, as, to their greater hardſhip, this caſual charity falls chiefly on the yeomen: either therefore Government muſt relieve the poor themſelves, or relieve the yeomen, that they may—if the firſt of theſe, and the beſt, be done, the laſt may be leſs wanting. To the higheſt order of people we may ſay, Retrench, to relieve the loweſt; but it muſt be confeſſed the middle order, the yeomen, are nearer being reduced to be objects of relief, than capable to be authors of it.

Having

Having entered generally into this ſubject, I muſt proceed to ſay, that much as I approve the ſyſtem of ſaving the annual million for the ſinking fund, it is only on a preſumption that it can be ſpared; for while diſtreſs prevails in the country, ſuch a meaſure in a nation is what in an individual would be that of a miſer who *ſtarves* and *ſaves*.

If theſe be not ſufficient grounds for relief, I will venture to ſay there is a greater ground than all theſe together, not barely the reſult, the direct dictate of nature.—It is not requiſite, for this purpoſe, to pronounce an eulogy on Man, to conſider him, as he is, the Lord of the Creation, the Image of his Maker, the Paragon of Animals:—in theſe levelling times perhaps ſuch an aſſertion of pre-eminence is a monarchical idea, an ariſtocratical attempt to raiſe one animal above another, when the preſent ſyſtem of equality would tend to make them all equal; for there is no argument which goes to prove one man equal to another, that would not alſo prove one animal equal to another. I ſay, take man according to this *ratio irrationalis*, conſider him barely as an animal, to do juſtice to his nature you muſt feed him accordingly. If you have a parrot, you naturally aſk what food you ſhould give it:—yet man is a carnivorous animal, and you do not enable him to eat fleſh; for I aver that bread and water are the chief food of moſt, nearly the ſole food of many labourers and their families; you therefore ſtint him, you make him beneath his nature, *impar ſibi*—he can neither poſſeſs his body nor his mind in perfection.—This may be no objection to you philoſophical levellers, it may even favour your ſyſtem of making man approach nearer to the beaſts that periſh: but let economiſts and politicians, financiers and ſtateſmen, obſerve that, if their humanity do not make them feel for *him*, their intereſt ſhould make them feel for *themſelves*; for he cannot thus have ſo long, ſo laborious, or in any way a life ſo productive towards the wealth of nations which population conſtitutes.—The greater enemy I am to equality, which I know to be impoſſible, the more friend I am to ſome approximation, which I am perſuaded is practicable—If I do not ſay that all can have the comforts of life, I do ſay that none ſhould have the ſuperfluities till all have the neceſſaries of it.

(*f*) I know

(*f*) I know how difficult it is, in the general operation of a tax, to exempt the poor; but as the total exception does prevail in the window tax and ſome others, I truſt it may be extended to more. As I hold private opinion on theſe ſubjects to be public property, and that an attempt, however it may fail to effect the above eligible purpoſe, is properly made; I cannot avoid ſuggeſting, inſtead of taxes to an equal amount, as far only as they affect the poor, to ſubſtitute one which might not—one which appears to me to have all the incidents a tax ought to have, none that it ought not. It is on an article of univerſal conſumption, ſo cheap now that no moderate tax on it would leſſen that conſumption, the price of it, after the impoſt, which would be little perceptible, leaving it ſtill far the cheapeſt of any commodity that could be uſed for the ſame purpoſe; it would fall on the conſumer, without being liable to the impoſition of the retailer; the productiveneſs of it would not only be great, but eaſily calculated from ſubſiſting documents in the Tax-office; it could not eaſily be evaded; and finally, the poor might be totally exempt from it—of this deſcription I conceive would be "*a Tax on Earthen Ware*," chiefly that called Queen's Ware, including alſo all other, except Red Ware, which is principally uſed by the poor.

I do not enter into the minute regulations of it, but only ſuggeſt generally, that the produce may be calculated, by a proportion it would bear to houſes, or even to the conſumption of glaſs in them, and to be collected in the ſame manner as in that article. I have only to add, that having felt it my duty to publiſh it, "*valeat quantum valere debet.*"

THE END.

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